



## **Program Year 2011 Request for Proposals (RFP) Responses to Questions**

### **Section 1: Application Submission Questions**

**1. Are all copies due on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>?**

Yes, one original hard copy and two electronic copies are due to the Grants Management Division before 3pm on Dec. 3, 2010. One of the electronic copies will be submitted online via the Grants RFP webpage <http://www.arlingtontx.gov/planning/grants/rfp.html> and the other will be submitted on a compact disc (CD) along with the original hard copy. Please note that the common sections of the electronic copies and the hard copy must match and be approved by an authorized signatory.

**2. How do I submit my online electronic application copy?**

The steps to submitting the electronic application via the Grants RFP webpage are as follows:

1. Click the Online Applicant Profile link on the RFP webpage.
2. Click the New Applicant link to create your profile.
3. Complete your applicant profile and click Submit.
4. Check your email to receive your Profile Access Code. To view/edit your profile or begin uploading documents, repeat Step 1, enter your Access Code, and move on to Step 5.
5. Click Browse to select a file to upload to your application submission. You may add additional files such as attachments by clicking the Add link below the file text box. You may remove a file that has been selected by clicking the Remove link to the right of the text box.
6. Click Upload to submit your application files to the City. All uploaded files become part of your grant application. You do not have to upload all files at once. You can return to your profile page at any time before 3pm on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> to upload additional files.
7. To view a list of files that have been successfully uploaded for your application, click View Uploaded Files. These files have been received by the City.
8. To upload additional documents, repeat Step 1, enter your Access Code, and repeat Steps 5 and 6.

**3. What do I do if I lost/forgot my Applicant Profile Access Code?**

Contact Grants Management at 817-459-6258 to obtain your Access Code.

**4. Can I change information in my Applicant Profile once it has been created?**

Yes. Once you receive your Access Code, you can log in to your profile and edit any of the information in the profile (i.e. contact info, grant type, program name, etc.).

**5. Can I change a file that has been submitted electronically if an updated version is available?**

No. The system will not permit you to alter or delete application files that have already been submitted. Please ensure that all documents submitted are the final approved versions of your application.

**6. Do I have to include all of the application attachments in my electronic copy?**

No, you should only include those specified on the Application Checklist. Please note that some documents are only required for the original hard copy. These documents are identified on the checklist.

**7. What size do the documents in my original application have to be?**

As stated in the RFP, all original hard copy documents should be 8 ½" x 11" and three hole-punched.

**8. Is there a size limit for the files submitted online?**

Yes, the maximum total size for the online application files is 40GB. This includes the application and all attachment in aggregate. Please contact Grants staff if you anticipate needing to exceed this limit.

**9. What kind of files can I submit as part of my electronic application?**

Only Microsoft Word and Excel files and PDF files are accepted through the online submission process. Please contact Grants staff if you have difficulty meeting this requirement.

**10. Is Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> the deadline to ask questions?**

In order to maintain a fair and open RFP process, the City requires all questions to be submitted in writing by November 12, 2010. Answers will be posted online at [www.arlingtontx.gov/planning/grants](http://www.arlingtontx.gov/planning/grants) by November 17, 2010. Questions submitted after the deadline may be considered only if Grants staff can post the responses before receiving the first application submitted after November 17, 2010.

**11. Can I submit more than one application?**

Yes, as long as each application is for a different project/program. You may submit up to 3 applications for each RFP type. If you respond to the same RFP multiple times, you must indicate on the Cover Sheet the priority of each application (i.e. #1 of 3). Also, you will need to create a separate online Applicant Profile for each application.

**12. Where can I find the required Environmental Review forms?**

This documentation only applies to the CDBG Projects, CDBG Economic Development, and HOME RFPs. It can be found on p.25-26 of the CDBG Projects RFP, p. 24-25 of the CDBG Economic Development RFP, and on p.29-30 of the HOME RFP.

**13. Where can I find the required Conflict of Interest forms?**

This documentation only applies to the CDBG Projects, CDBG Economic Development, and HOME RFPs. It can be found on p.22-24 of the CDBG Projects RFP, p. 21-23 of the CDBG Economic Development RFP, and on p.26-28 of the HOME RFP.

**14. What is meant by "internal controls"?**

"Internal controls" refers to auditing procedures, purchasing, chain of command, signature authorization and other policies that demonstrate sound financial practices.

**15. What is a Pro Forma?**

A Pro Forma is an accounting document that provides a summary of the sources and uses of an organization's funds for the proposed project.

**16. Where can I find the Signature Authorization form?**

The signature authorization form is found on p.21 of the CDBG Projects RFP and on p.20 of the CDBG Economic Development RFP. The signature authorization in the CDBG Public Services and Planning RFP is found on p.2. It can be found on p.25 of the HOME RFP and on p.2 of the ESG RFP.

**17. What type of drawings should I submit with my application?**

For construction projects, it is recommended to submit elevations of all sides, floor plans with room sizes (for homes and buildings), landscape plans, a site plan (if property control or land contract is secured), detail of exterior materials to be used and any other renderings that will assist the evaluation of the proposal.

**18. Can I unlock the RFP document to alter the formatting/page spacing?**

No. You may only enter information into the form fields provided. Some questions instruct you to use an attachment if more information is needed.

**19. How do I indicate that a member of my Board of Directors lives in Arlington on this year's application?**

Click the check box next to the member's name to indicate that he/she lives in Arlington. An unchecked box means that the member does not live in Arlington.

**20. How do I indicate the units of service in the Service Activity Table?**

You may make a note in the Activity cell as to what type of units are represented and then represent the number of units of service in the adjacent cell under Total Units of Service per Year.

**21. Is spell check available on this document?**

No. This function is disabled since it is a protected document. Only the form fields may be modified.

**22. How much money can I request?**

Grant funds are intended to serve as gap or seed funding for programs or projects that would not otherwise be offered. While there are no published limits to the amounts that can be requested by either new or current grant recipients, please keep in mind that each grant program has limited funds available and some have caps to which the City must adhere. See the Annual Action Plan budgets from previous years for examples of funding amounts granted for each grant. Links to these documents are available at <http://www.arlingtontx.gov/planning/grants/>.

**23. Do I have to submit my organization's Policies and Procedures?**

Yes. However, organizations that have submitted their Policies and Procedures to the City of Arlington within the past 12 months and have not made changes during that period do not have to submit them again. Please indicate in your application if this exception applies to your organization. Also, only the HOME RFP requires the Policies and Procedures to be included in both the hard copy and the electronic copies. The other RFPs for CDBG and ESG only require the inclusion of Policies and Procedures in the hard copy of the application.

**24. How many national objectives can I select?**

You may select multiple national objectives per application. Please refer to the Guidebook when selecting which national objective applies to your application.

**25. Can I include letters of community support even if not required for my program/project?**

Yes. Please include these in the hard copy original only.

**26. Can I submit letters of commitment of funding for other aspects of the program/project that are not included in this funding request?**

Yes. However, please ensure that all documents submitted are relevant to the success of the proposed program/project.

**27. What time period should I use to calculate the number of unduplicated clients served?**

You should calculate the number of clients to be served based on the term of the grant which is one year for CDBG and ESG and up to two years for HOME.

**28. What is a project evaluation plan?**

A project evaluation plan is a series of steps that will be taken by an organization to assess whether the proposed activity was successful in accomplishing its objectives. The plan should include outcome measurements and assessment of the sustainability of the activity upon conclusion of the grant.

**Section 2: Program/Project Questions**

**1. Do I have to have offices in Arlington?**

No, but you have to demonstrate that your proposed service/program benefits Arlington residents. Please note that priority may be given to applicants providing the same service/program that do have offices in Arlington.

**2. Do you have to be a non-profit organization in order to apply?**

Public services must be provided by a non-profit organization or governmental entity. For organizations providing public services that are not yet 501(c)(3) non-profits, it is necessary to submit a copy of the application to the IRS for this status with your grant application. Non-profit status must be received before funding is awarded. Due to the highly competitive process for CDBG Public Service and ESG grants, it is strongly encouraged that applicants have their non-profit status secured at the time of application.

Other activities such as housing development, construction, economic development, and planning may be performed by for-profit organizations. Contact the Grants Management Office if further clarification is needed.

**3. What should I do if I don't have a budget yet for my program?**

Proposals that do not contain all of the required documents will be considered ineligible.

**4. Do I need to submit a program budget or an organizational budget?**

You need to submit both. All of the RFPs require that you submit a budget for the specific program or project proposed in addition to an overall organizational budget.

**5. Do I have to provide matching funds?**

Matching funds are required for ESG at a minimum rate of 100% of planned expenditures plus additional administration match to be determined at the time of award. Matching funds are required for HOME at a rate of 25% of requested funds. Although match is not required for CDBG, the City strongly recommends leveraging of additional funds for its CDBG-funded activities. Leveraged funds will be considered in the CDBG grant review process.

**6. Do volunteer hours count as leveraged funding?**

Yes. Volunteer labor can be counted as an "other" line item on your program budget. Volunteer labor rates should be consistent with those utilized by the Volunteer Center of North Texas.

**7. For projects, what constitutes acceptable working capital documentation?**

Documentation for working capital can be in the form of a letter of credit from a lending institution or an organization's financial statements. Because funds are distributed on a reimbursement basis, working capital should cover the total project cost.

**8. Who do I need to contact regarding requirements for projects impacting the right of way?**

The City's Planning staff will be able to assist you. You should be prepared to provide staff with a project description. Planning staff can be contacted in person at the One Start Desk or via phone at 817-459-7825 (Planner of the Day).

**9. Can faith-based organizations apply for funding?**

Yes. However, religious activities must not be funded with federal grant dollars and must be voluntary for all program participants. Religious activities must also be held in a separate time or location than grant-funded activities. Faith-based organizations are encouraged to review program regulations at 24 CFR Part 570 and 68 FR 56396.

**10. How do I become a certified Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO)?**

You must be a non-profit organization and submit a completed CHDO Certification Review form along with all required documentation. The form is available upon request from the Grants Management Office or at the Grants RFP webpage.

**11. How do I become a certified Community-Based Development Organization (CBDO)?**

You must submit a completed CBDO Certification Checklist along with all required documentation. The form is available upon request from the Grants Management Office or at the Grants RFP webpage.

**12. What documents satisfy the Client Application/Intake Form requirement for the CDBG Public Services RFP?**

You should submit a document or sample client report that is generated when a client enters or seeks to enter your program. These documents may be completed by clients, program staff, or referring organizations and provide a way for your organization to capture information about the client.

**13. Do the members of my Board of Directors have to live in Arlington?**

No. However, the City recommends inclusion of Arlington residents on Boards of Directors of organizations receiving funding through City-administered grants. Board composition is considered in the grant review process.

**14. What do I do if my Board of Directors does not meet during the open RFP period?**

For cases in which a Board of Directors does not meet at all during the period of an open RFP, the City will accept an original signed letter from the President of the Board of the Directors indicating preliminary approval for submission of the application. The letter must indicate the date of the Board meeting at which the proposal will be reviewed and voted on by the entire Board of Directors. Board meeting minutes indicating a vote for approval of the application should be submitted as soon as possible if the Board does not meet until after the RFP deadline. Official Board approval as demonstrated by meeting minutes are required in order to execute a contract in the event a respondent is selected to receive an award.

**15. Does the Environmental Review form apply to acquisition projects?**

Yes. The Environmental Review form is required for all applications for CDBG Projects and HOME funds involving real property.

**Section 3: HOME Investment Partnerships**

**1. Do Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) have to provide matching funds?**

Yes, all HOME grant recipients are required to provide at least 25% matching funds.

#### **Section 4: Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)**

**1. To whom do the ESG funding caps apply?**

ESG funding caps apply to the City of Arlington as a HUD grantee. The City will distribute its ESG funds in compliance with the ESG caps for each service category. Applicants do not need to apply these caps to their program budgets, but should take them into consideration when determining how much funding to request. The caps for each category are listed on p.25 of the Application Guidebook for your reference.

**2. Can an organization apply for just one category of ESG services?**

Yes, ESG applicants may apply for just one category. For example, an applicant may apply to offer a homelessness prevention program and not shelter operations. Applicants may also apply for multiple categories of ESG funds.

**3. What activities qualify as ESG essential services?**

ESG essential services include social services that help homeless individuals and families obtain housing and become self-sufficient, such as case management, physical and mental health treatment, substance abuse counseling, and childcare.

#### **Section 5: Other**

**1. When will these projects be available for bid by builders?**

Eligible projects may be proposed in response to the CDBG Projects, CDBG Economic Development, ESG and HOME RFPs. Builders seeking to serve as contractors on funded projects may contact sub-awardees during Spring 2011 to discuss procurement opportunities. Arlington's sub-awardees will receive final notice of their awards in April 2011. Funds are available for Program Year 2011 on July 1, 2011.